

a skeleton worm-eaten into meaningless intricacies—
rimes bateties, equivoquees, jraternisees, ballades balladantes,
rondeaux jumeaux. We read of poems in strophes alliter-
ated throughout, of masterpieces able to be read in thirty-
two different ways. Though Charles d'Orleans can be
delightful at his rare best, the monotony of even his
collected works weighs like lead upon the reader.

With Marot this tangle of mist and moonshine had
been penetrated by new light both from the older past
—he edited Villon—and from the Classics. He too was a
poet of the Court—the Renaissance Court of Franfois I;
and he developed a new style, a typically French, simple,
yet sly candour to be perfected hereafter by La Fontaine.
For Marot's

Lors le lion ces deux grands yeux vetit
Et vers le rat Ics touma un petit

is exactly the La Fontaine of the *Fables*; just
as

Quand les perites vilotieres
Trouvent quelque hardi amant
Qui veuille mettre un diamant
Devant leurs yeux rians et verts,
Coac! elles tombent a l'envers.
Tu ris² Maudit soit-il qui erre!
C'est la grand vertu de la pierre
Qui fblouit ainsi les yeux

is exactly the La Fontaine of the *Contes*. At
moments
indeed Marot can closely anticipate Ronsard
himself:

Adieu amours, adieu gentil corsage,
Adieu ce teint, adieu ces friands yeux!
Je n'ai pas eu de vous grand avantage.
Un moins amant aura peut-etre mieux.

But he could not satisfy the passionate
young of 1549.
With their humanist contempt for the
tyiceries of the
Middle Age, for *balade* and *virelai*, they found
him on the

other hand too ignobly plain—like
Wordsworth after